

National Agricultural Research, Extension, Education, and Economics Advisory Board

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MINUTES

Executive Committee Conference Call
August 4, 2005
12:00-1:00 p.m., eastern daylight time

Executive Committee members present today: Martin Massengale, Chair; George Hoffman, Vice Chair; Carol Keiser; Joseph Jen, Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics (REE) (ex-officio); Walter Armbruster; Jeff Armstrong; Tom Fretz; and John Suttie.

Executive Committee members unable to attend were: Tonya Antle; Cornelia Flora.

USDA Officials and Staff present were: Merle Pierson, Deputy Under Secretary for REE; Deborah Hanfman, Executive Director and Shirley Morgan-Jordan, Program Support Coordinator, of the NAREEE Advisory Board, USDA; Terry Van Doren, Director, Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, and Lindsay Nall, of REE, USDA.

Guests present included: Dr. Joe Hiller, Assistant Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, University of Arizona, member Oglala Sioux Tribe and Extension Agent, Specialist, and Administrator (3 states) and colleague, Ron Hedberg; Joan Gill, CSREES, USDA

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS: Advisory Board Chair, Martin Massengale, welcomed the Executive Committee, Under Secretary for REE (REE) Joseph Jen (ex-officio) and Deputy Under Secretary for REE Merle Pierson, and guests to the conference call meeting.

Dr. Joseph Jen, Under Secretary for Research, Education, and Economics, said that Dr. Pierson has 35 years of experience at Land-Grant institutions and is very familiar with the system and REE. He comes from USDA as Deputy Under Secretary for Food Safety. Dr. Jen said that, in the midst of working on the federal budget for FY 2007, it looks as though it will be very tough one.

Dr. Merle Pierson, Deputy Under Secretary for REE, said that it is tighter this year Department-wide. We must be careful in prioritizing and will be doing more with less. He encouraged the Advisory Board members to talk to their stakeholders about core topics, because USDA cannot cover all areas with adequate funding.

Dr. Jen informed the Executive Committee that Secretary Johanns is going around the country for discussion on the future farm bill.

FUTURE FULL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING (SCHEDULED FOR OCTOBER 18-20, 2005 IN WASHINGTON, DC): Carol Keiser, Chair of the Planning Committee for the October Advisory Board Meeting, provided an update on the planning. She said that this group had a one-hour conference call just prior to this one. The attendees discussed topics and objectives for the three Focus Sessions – *Critical Emerging Diseases; Rural America; and Strengthening Partnerships*. Each focus leader is putting together a timeline for their focus topic. In the first Focus Topic, they are concentrating on BSE and Avian Influenza. Members of the Planning Committee will review last year's meeting recommendations: on the broad area of Emerging Diseases and Pathogens, with regard to the *Homeland Security Presidential Directive 9 (HSPD-9)*. Dr. Massengale said that the transmission from animal to man is of concern to the Secretary.

Focus Topic 2 is on Changes in Rural Development & Links to REE, chaired by Dr. Cornelia Flora. It will begin with a lunch meeting with Mr. Allan Johnson, Deputy Under Secretary for Rural Development, USDA, who will address interactions among agencies on rural development and suggest ways to increase coordination or collaboration. The Economic Research Service (ERS) will be leading the panel off after lunch to discuss rural development in terms of place (not sector). Note: When agencies were asked earlier for their suggestions for this upcoming Advisory Board Meeting, ERS suggested that rural development be considered. Several Executive Committee members suggested additional panel members that Carol said would be given to the Planning Committee as they develop their respective panels.

Focus Topic 3 is on Strengthening Partnerships, chaired by Dr. Tom Fretz, who said that the session did not need 3 hours, because the objective was to initiate discussions among the land-grant partners and USDA.

The Specialty Crop Listening Session, which was postponed in August at Michigan State University, would follow the Board meeting in Washington, DC at a day and time still to be determined. The August costs turned out to exceed the Board's budgetary cap mandated by Congress, and occurred at a time of the fiscal year when the Advisory Board Office's budget was more limited.

**DISCUSS OPTIONS FOR RESCHEDULING SPECIALTY CROP COMMITTEE'S
STAKEHOLDER LISTENING SESSION (FROM POSTPONED AUGUST 2005 DATE) -**

Walt Armbruster, Chair, Specialty Crop Committee, said that a conference call was held the day before and it was decided that the Committee hold its Listening Session with the Advisory Board Meeting in October 2005 in Washington, DC. He said that the

previous panel members do have some scheduling conflicts. Several options as to when the Listening Session should be held were presented. Dr. Jen noted that the NAREEE Advisory Board has a congressional budget cap; the economies gained by holding both the Board and Listening Session together. Chair Martin Massengale said that it offers the opportunity for the Board and Specialty Crop Members to mix together.

EXTENSION IN INDIAN COUNTRY: Dr. Joseph Hiller, Assistant Dean, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, University of Arizona, briefed Executive Committee members on the importance of Extension in Indian Country that is not linked to a Tribal College or University, and the need for the EIRP (Extension Indian Reservation Program) to grow. He provided Executive Committee members with background material on this program and some of the issues. Dr. Massengale noted that the other Native American representatives on the Board would have found this information of interest. Dr. Hiller said that of the 9,000 county agents in the United States, 28 are in tribes. NASULGC limits the tribes geographically. A joint COPS task force study of Extension being done in NASS gets the right numbers. Dr. Joan Gil said that this issue is on the forefront of CSREES. We need to work with NASULGC and get natural dialog going, because there needs to be Extension in Indian Country. The Chair thanked Joe Hiller for keeping the Board apprised of these activities. He posed the question as to what the role of the Board would be in this area.

UPDATE ON ADVISORY BOARD NOMINATIONS FOR FY 2006 (OCT. 1, 2005): Deborah Hanfman, Executive Director, Advisory Board, noted that there were about 100 or more nominations received in her office and that a couple of categories appeared to be low in nominees, based on a the incoming mail reviewed. There are still additional FedEx and standard mail packages coming in that are date stamped within the deadline period. The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Martin Massengale, Chair

Deborah T. Hanfman, Executive Director

Initials following Advisory Board Approval

DATE APPROVED BY BOARD